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Amazing Adjustments Made By This Sanderling

Canned liver soup is good food for orphaned Sanderlings — judging from its results with the injured Sanderling I picked up near Gilman Park, San Francisco, on the Audubon field trip, February 14, 1943. By the time I arrived home that evening he had dried off and had drunk fresh water several times. But a metropolitan neighborhood which even a land bird would find inhospitable— offers little in the way of food for a hungry and emaciated shore bird. A display of canned baby food in a corner drugstore suggested liver soup.

As it comes from the can, liver soup is the color and consistency of a sticky mud flat. Perhaps the Sanderling also recognized it as something familiar, for when it was held before him in a deep cup, he probed in it eagerly. Pieces of shrimp and of bread which had been ignored when held before him were pulled cut and gulped when mixed with it. Its only disadvantage resulted from the bird's habit, after a series of rapid probings, of shaking his head vigorously from side to side scattering liver soup in all directions. Later the cup was placed in the corner of his box and from that time on he fed from it whenever he wished.

The Sanderling's only visible injury was a broken tibio-tarsus. The lower leg, from which the toes were gone, dangled only by a thread of dry skin grown backward and attached near the proximal joint of the tibio-tarsus. The bird was unable to stand on his good leg and spent his entire time squatting on the "heel" of his good leg. To move from place to place he shuffled awkwardly on this "heel." Every day for a week he spent much time flapping his wings so that the floor of his large box was spattered with blood from his wings. On February 21 we found him balanced on his extended good leg, the wing-beating, it was now clear, had been painful efforts to attain this position after long disuse. During the next few days he spent more and more time standing on his good leg, and from then on was seldom found in the old position.

Out of his box he hopped rapidly about on the floor, soon learning to head directly for the kitchen where he efficiently cleaned up the crumbs. Held in my hand away from furniture and walls he made long flights to the floor.

Fresh water was kept in his box, and he used it for drinking and bathing. Several times I was awakened by his noisy bathing at 4 a. m.

There was also fine bird sand in his box, but in the few minutes I had to watch him each day I never saw him take any of this.

On February 27 with the idea of setting him free I snipped off the dangling

leg which would only handicap him on his release. Put back in his box a few drops of blood fell from the wound and he immediately went to the pan of sand and attempted to dust himself vigorously.

After two weeks of captivity his constant improvement ceased. He spent more and more time standing in the corner of his large box, head toward the wall. Finally even the liver soup was largely ignored though he still listlessly picked up bread crumbs from the floor of his box.

On March 4, my next free day from work, Mrs. Kelly and I took him to the mud flat at the foot of Liberty Street in Alameda, in lieu of sandy beaches in the vicinity closed because of war. It was about one o'clock and the tide was beginning to fall. No birds had yet arrived on the narrow border of exposed mud, but we released the Sanderling to observe his behavior. He alighted near the edge of the water, probed in the mud and then hopped rapidly down the shoreline, all quite normal behavior except for a slight tendency to sink in the mud and effort to pull free. When I followed him to pick him up, he escaped by flying out in a curve over the water, alighting farther up the mud flat. Then a small flock of Sanderlings flew past, and with an "eek" he flashed into the air and was lost in the flock. They settled at the far end of the mud flat and began feeding. Our last view of our Sanderling was through binoculars a few minutes later. We were able to distinguish him hopping energetically about in the close flock of Sanderlings, now joined by a few larger shore birds.

The next day Mrs. Kelly visited the mud flat when it was again suitable for shore birds but found no trace of our Sanderling. Whether he had been able to leave the feeding ground the afternoon before we do not know.

—Ruth Elwonger

July Meeting

The 334th meeting of the Association was held on Thursday, July 12, 1945, with Arthur H. Myer, presiding.

Mr. Joseph J. Webb reported that he had wired our senator about Assembly Bill 89, "Placing a Bounty on Crows", and that the senator promised to give the bill due consideration.

The program consisted of summer vacation reports from members. Observations on birds in the indicated localities were given by the following: Michael Mote, Mt. Tamalpais; Mr. Webb, Napa; Mr. Bradley, Contra Costa County; Miss Perry, Santa Cruz; Frances Blake, Yosemite; a guest, Sequoia; Monica Goen, Iowa; Miss Mary Barry, Watsonville; Ensign Greenhood, Saipan; Mr. Myer, San Francisco Scout Camp, Cazadero; and Miss Amy Rinehart, Napa.

—Monica Goen, *Recording Secretary*

The July Field Trip

The day was sunny and calm for the trip to Burlingame, July 15.

We started along Easton Drive and continued along tree-lined streets; beautiful flowers on all sides, hydrangeas especially seeming to thrive there. With the gracious assistance of Mrs. Baer, who sacrificed some precious moments with her son at home on visit from the services, we were directed to the Fagan Estate

which is a veritable ornithologist's paradise. The beauty of this estate and the many other fine examples of landscaping would more than repay one for the trip without good birding; however, from here on we had very good birding. Flycatchers were predominant. No warblers or purple finches and, strangest of all, no song sparrows were seen. There were housefinches, chickadees and bush-tits everywhere.

An unusual Olive-sided Flycatcher was seen. There was a large area of white on the sides, extending well above and below the wing.

We left the Fagan estate to go around the road to a nearby spot to eat lunch and here is where we had the most interesting experience. Sgt. Pyle called our attention to a eucalyptus tree across the road. On a bare, lower limb was the nest of a Wood Pewee, fully exposed to view, with no foliage to hide it. A slender branch on one side helped to support the nest but did not help to conceal it. The nest was between fifteen and twenty feet from the ground. The nest appeared so small, that I doubt whether we would have known what it was if the bird had not gotten into it as we looked on. It couldn't have been much over three inches in diameter and on closer approach one could see the grasses wound straight along the outer rim, making a very neat round cup, not very deep. One witty person said, "What nice calculation; it just fits him." Two or three times one of the birds sat on the nest for a very short time and made the motion of turning the eggs or getting nestlings into a comfortable position for brooding. It definitely wasn't the complete circling of the nest made in nest building. Once one of the birds on coming to the nest poked into it with its bill but if it was feeding it was done with such rapidity as I have never observed in the feeding of any other species.

After lunch we circled around more pleasant roads to bring us back to our starting point. I feel that special thanks are due our president Mr. Myer who is so helpful and unselfish in his efforts in getting us to our destination or with suggestions on transportation.

The twenty-five species observed were: California Quail, Western Gull, Mourning Dove, Anna Hummingbird, Allen Hummingbird, Downy Woodpecker, Olive-sided Flycatcher, Western Flycatcher, Western Wood Pewee, California Jay, Chestnut-backed Chickadee, Plain Titmouse, Bush-Tit, Wren Tit, Robin, Russet-backed Thrush, Hutton Vireo, English Sparrow, Meadowlark, Brewer Blackbird, Black-headed Grosbeak, House Finch, Spotted Towhee. Brown Towhee, Junco.

The following guests attended: Marguerite Goen, Dorothy Baukol, and Sgt. Robert L. Pyle. The nine members attending were: Monica Goen, Mary Roscoe, Mrs. E. C. Stowell, Randall Pinckert, Philip Baukol, Arthur H. Myer, Barbara Myer, Mrs. A. B. Baer, and Vee Curtis.

Vee Curtis, *Leader and Historian*

Observations

Edited by Junea W. Kelly

The following observations have been reported:
White-tailed Kite, June 19, Ignacio, Marin County, Mary C. Courtright.
Arizona Hooded Oriole, June 18, Piedmont; Junea W. Kelly.

Notice:

Leaders to be appointed.
Bring lunch and binoculars.

Ocean City, N. J. — Residents who use the Roosevelt Boulevard report the osprey family has returned to its \$200 mansion in the skies built for it by Atlantic City Electric Co.

All went well in fair weather, but when foul befell, the nest short-circuited the wires. By some phenomenon, the ospreys always escaped injury, but circuits burned out and linemen were more than angry.

Time after time they evicted the ospreys to the last twig, but they always built again. So at last the electric company put up another pole, a bit higher, with good cross arms and wired heavy branches to it. The ospreys found it made to order and live happily there every summer.

The 335th meeting of the Audubon Association of the Pacific will be held Thursday, August 9th, at 7:30 p. m. in the Assembly Room of the San Francisco Public Library, Larkin and McAllister Streets.

Mr. Albert C. Hawbecker, science instructor at Madera High School, and at present working at the Museum of Vertebrate Zoology at the University of California, is to be the speaker of the evening. His subject will be; "The White-tailed Kite", of which he has made a special study.

Organized January 25, 1917

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Monthly meetings second Thursday, 7:30 p. m.

Assembly Room, San Francisco Public Library, Larkin and McAllister Sts., San Francisco

Membership dues, payable January 1st, \$3.00 per year

Student memberships, \$1.50 per year

Life memberships, \$50.00

Members are responsible for dues until written notice of resignation
is received by Treasurer